retreat (ōk phannā) in order that her child would come out (ōk) more easily. Here none sought to divide the worlds of the natural and the supernatural, or to mark off "imitative magic" from the "learning by example of the natural world." A stronger influence came from more powerful agents, so that the effects of the Buddhist temple carried greater effect than the actions of a mere neighbor. Yet any like influence was of aid, especially in a verbal similarity. Thus, an event occurring on a Friday was apt to be auspicious because the Thai name for Friday contains an element identical in sound (though etymologically different) to the word for happiness (wansuk=Friday; suk=happiness), and for the fortunate status of true adulthood (suk=mature, ripe).

Stability in a Floating World

In explaining why some children were "born easily and were easy to raise" (liang ngāi) certain persons simply said, "They were born into the right family. Those born to the wrong family usually die." In defining the "right" family, merit, habituation, and helpfulness converge.

Most families were thought to live together as a group in life after life. In view of the separateness of souls, how was this brought about? The key lay in the conviction that people who made merit together met in future lives. Since most merit-making was undertaken as an enterprise of the nuclear family, sometimes with close kinsmen and friends, they would find each other. Some of the eagerness of friends to help (chuai ngān) with cash or labor was in order to meet in later lives. These persons were used to each other, used to helping each other, and so might marry. Thus, if they lived rightly, the nuclear family, maybe with an infusion of beloved old friends, expected to carry on in the next existence. Although a family's prosperity proved its merit, and its wealth facilitated making more merit, continuity in time was not limited to the wealthy. Proof that a couple had been married in a previous life lay in the birth of a boy as first born. Such a couple was known as a "khū" (pair), and divorce was held to be highly unlikely.

How did a child find its "right" family? After whatever necessary stay in purgatory, the khwan soul of a deceased member roosted in a tree near to its old home, then flew into an accustomed womb. One recalls the start of the blessing (p.48), "Come, khwan! Come my own child!" A woman hoped that the khwan was one previously born to her. "A couple lost its first child. Later the wife was fearing for the life of their sickly second-born." The husband said, "It is according to your sin and merit. If the child is your own child, he will live with you. If not, he cannot."

FOOD IN CONNECTION WITH FESTIVITIES AND CEREMONIES

262 796 A discussion of food habits in Bang Chan would be incomplete without some description of ceremonies ((l)ngaan)[1] which dominate the village scene during the dry, post-harvest season. These events are of interest in connection with food habits because of 1) the prominent place that food occupies in them, 2) the cultural significance and relatively large cost, both of which must be taken into account in any plans for dietary improvement and 3) the possible influence of differences in food habits at the ceremonial season and of problems of sanitation incident to large-scale food preparation on the nutrition and health of village residents.

796 The season for ceremonies and festivities opened with the harvest rites to the Rice Goddess and closed with the beginning of Buddhist Lent in mid-July. The big occasions were cremations, ordinations into the Buddhist priesthood, weddings, and rites for cutting of the topknot[2] or homage-to-the-
527 teacher.[3] Smaller family celebrations might mark such events as the raising and dedicating of a house, the return of a son from the army, or even public events such as the completion
264 of a road or a bridge. Whatever the focal activity, a gala meal was served first to priests and then to guests.

[782] Offering food to priests brought merit, which ensured happiness in later rebirths (see p. 9). Because the greater the number of priests served, the greater the merit, people were spurred to put on as large an affair as they could
[554] afford. Moreover, a person was judged throughout the community by the abundance and quality of the food served daily and
527 at festivities. Thus, there was reason to make a (l)ngaan
796 as opulent as possible, but celebrations of every degree occurred in Bang Chan, from lavish feasts to simple ceremonies.

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[192] [461] 1. Significantly the same Thai word is used for work and for ceremony.

[302] [881] [355] 2. Topknots, formerly worn by all Thai children, used to be cut ritually at the time of puberty. In Bang Chan, the growing of a topknot had become primarily an attempt to improve a child's health. Few school age children wore topknots. They were usually cut earlier than puberty.

[577] 3. A person who had received specialized knowledge from a teacher gave thanks annually in a ceremony, to which those who had profited by this knowledge were obliged to come and/or contribute. Thus, all the patients of a traditional medical practitioner helped him to honor his teacher.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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*125 first person singular—e.g., "When he insulted *me*, I . . ."—the informant will realize that he is describing himself, and the projective advantage of the item will be lost. On the other hand, if the individual described in the item is referred to as "John," "him," "people," or some other hypothetical soul, the informant will be less aware that he is describing himself, and the projectability of the item will be maintained.

In my own work, I never became convinced that the SCT would operate as a "projective technique" in the terms just outlined. I would argue that the data elicited by the technique is indeed less guarded and less censored than data obtained by more direct investigative methods, but this is a result of the linguistic structure of the SCT, not of its projective capacity, if what is meant by "projective" is that informants are unaware that they are talking about themselves. This conclusion about the SCT is based primarily on theoretical considerations, but it is also heavily influenced by the distinctive nature of my own research medium, the Thai language.

*125 193 • 196 In fact, the "special" nature of Thai almost precluded the SCT operating projectively in the terms described above. That is, in ordinary Thai usage, pronouns and proper nouns are often not used. In linguistic terms, they represent "optional" rather than "obligatory" grammatical categories, with the semantic context accounting for any seeming confusion. When they are used, however, they function as specifying and explicating devices: to single out the person or persons referred to from a larger, ambiguous social "field," and thus *distinguish* him or them semantically. This specification function is further enhanced by the fact that all Thai pronouns have associated with them an attribute of social status, and some are associated with an attribute of group membership, *e.g.*, *khon raw*, which may mean either its literal English translation, "we people" or "I who am a member of an unspecified group as distinguished from you, who are a member of another unspecified group." The significance of all this is that when pronouns and proper nouns are used, Thai are considerably more attentive to their referents than are English speakers to theirs, and they tend to take them more literally.

Because of this Siamese sensitivity to "active" pronoun usage, I decided not to use the Thai equivalent of the hypothetical "John" or "Mary" (villagers would wonder precisely which "John" or "Mary"), or the first person singular forms, *phom* (used by males) and *chan* (used primarily by females, but often by males). These last two would not only reduce the supposed projective quality of the item to nothing, but would appear excessively awkward in an SCT item; using them would be akin to saying in English, "When he insulted me myself, I myself. . . ." Of the remaining Thai pronouns, those most frequently used in the SCT items were *raw*

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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("we" or "generalized I")[9] and *khon raw* ("we people"). However, I used two other terms, *khon* ("people") and *khaw* ("he," "she," or "they") in those items most descriptive of the expression of ego-alien sentiments: that is, those sentiments which, on the basis of my knowledge of the villagers, I expected to be most readily denied as being self-referring. Thus, an aggression item read: "*Khon most often get angry when . . .*," instead of "*Raw most often get angry when. . . .*" To simplify matters for the reader, later SCT materials which list both the original English language item and the English translation of the Thai translation will also include the Thai pronouns that were used in the various items.

The third stage of the SCT construction involved the pre-testing of the SCT schedule with ten villagers. A major aim of these trial interviews was to examine the quality of all the items. I was particularly concerned with how well informants understood the items and with identifying those items which interested them, those which required revision, those which brought forth revealing material, and those which elicited useless information.

The second purpose of the pre-test was to train my assistant in how to conduct the SCT interviews. Of principal concern was to try to minimize the effects of the interpersonal situation on the informant. Such effects can never be fully cancelled out, but they can be controlled to the extent of insuring that the data obtained represent the informant's product, not the product of ideas the interviewer might introduce into the situation. The major task of the training period, therefore, was instructing of the assistant in elementary interviewing techniques.[10]

The instructions also included such considerations as seating arrangements: try to locate the informant so that the canal—where people paddle by and can be waved to—is in our line of sight, not his. Ideally, he should be able to observe only the interviewers. If interviews are to be conducted in boats (later, eight of them were) the boat should be pulled off into one of the canal tributaries to minimize the disturbance from canal traffic. In general, privacy can be obtained by telling informants that since we wanted

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[9] *Raw* as a "generalized I" is not as ear-catching in Thai as it is in English. Thus, although *raw* can always mean "we," it is a perfect synonym, not a substitute, for "I" when the speaker wishes to indicate less self-reference. Another way of putting it is that when it is used to mean "I," the ordinary "we"-"I" contrast is psychologically inoperative; *raw* simply becomes an attenuated form of "I."

[10] The techniques which I had the most difficulty impressing on my assistants concerned such seemingly simple matters as the following: never afford the informant any hint of a response; if his first few responses are wild, repeat the instructions, and pick up the interview where it was left off, adding the items with the strange responses at the end; do not hesitate to encourage the informant with comments such as "that is fine"; if the informant gives funny responses, smile but do not laugh; if he is hesitating too long on an item, simply repeat the item as a prod; if he does not respond after three repeats, go on to the next item, and the like.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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the part of older people.[12] Particularly obvious is the absence of any reference to accumulating Buddhist merit. Neither is there any reference to the pleasures derived from dealing happily or enjoyably with other people. The closest we get to this is with the responses of two informants who are concerned mainly with the welfare of their children, and who speak in terms of "inspiring respect" in their children or assuming the role of "doctor" who, either by his knowledge (in case the children are ill) or wealth, could take care of them. Given all the conceivable things that villagers might wish to be—fanciful, real, personal, social, of this world, and of any world—the dominant wish is to have status, wealth, and respectability within their prevailing peasant context.

The next item, "*Most of all he wants to . . .*" is essentially a confirmation of the above findings. However, perhaps because of the syntax of the Thai version of the item and the inclusion of the word, "most" (*"The thing which raw wants the most is (namely) . . ."*) the responses assume a considerably more extreme and "unimodal" form. The overwhelming majority of the informants, 77 percent, want only one thing: money. A few of them say that they want what are essentially cultural variations of money: property, rice fields, land, cattle, and jewelry. Several of them almost wax purple about the significance of money in their lives: *"The thing which raw wants the most is (namely) . . .* have money and gold, because money can help us all the time. Whatever one wishes to have, one can use money to buy it all. Even when one wants a wife, if one has a lot of money one can have anyone's daughter"; ". . . have money. Money is better than anything else. It is only the moon and stars that money cannot buy"; ". . . to have money. She wants money very much because when she lacks other things she can find something to take their place, but when she lacks money she is most unhappy"; ". . . have wealth because everything else comes after that." These responses, of course, explicate the major function of money. They indicate that money is not an end in itself, but a means by which to achieve some of the other life goals appearing here.

The minority responses to this item are in no case held by more than four individuals. Four villagers do give religious responses, saying that what they want most is to accumulate merit (one mentions both merit and money); three refer to maintaining the welfare of their families (one of them merging money and succorance by saying that he wants enough money to provide for his family); and four say that they want happiness (again, two of them linking money and happiness together).

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[12] There is nothing in the grammatical-semantic structure of the Thai version of this item inhibiting a religiously oriented response. The Thai cognate for the verb "to be" here is "*pen*," which could easily result in a response such as ". . . *pen khon thii mii bun*," or ". . . a person who has merit." This would be the most obvious "religious" completion under the circumstances.